



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
New Orleans District

# News Release

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# Construction begins in New Orleans to replace Industrial Canal Lock

*Two contracts awarded: demolition of Galvez Street Wharf and  
environmental clean-up, clearing in East Bank Industrial Area*

NEW ORLEANS – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has begun construction in earnest of the \$603-million replacement of the navigation lock on the Industrial Canal in New Orleans.

Two contracts have been awarded for actual construction (pile testing was completed a year ago), said Col. Thomas Julich, district engineer of the New Orleans District:

✍ \$22.4 million for major environmental clean-up and clearance of abandoned industrial sites in the East Bank Industrial Area, to Washington Group International Inc., based in Boise, Idaho.

✍ \$2.6 million to demolish the Galvez Street Wharf on the canal's west bank, to Virginia Wrecking Co., based in Stapleton, Ala. Demolition will begin in June.

"This work is the most tangible milestone so far in our efforts to replace the antiquated, under-sized lock, a project with significant benefits to the local and national economies," Col. Julich said.

The new lock will be 1,200 feet long and 110 feet wide. Today's lock was opened to vessels in 1921 and measures 640- by 75-feet.

The two construction sites flank the site where the new lock will be built. The sites are between the Lower 9<sup>th</sup> Ward and St. Claude communities, in the ¾-mile of canal between North Claiborne and Florida avenues. All work will be done within the floodwalls.

Completion is expected in late 2002 in the East Bank Industrial Area. This project began with preparatory work in December 2000. Completion of the Galvez wharf project is expected by mid-2002.

The lock project will create work for 950 people for the duration of construction, says a study by Dr. Tim Ryan, a University of New Orleans economist. All construction contracts will include a local-labor preference clause establishing the goal of hiring lock-neighborhood people for at least 10 percent of the work force.

The way was cleared for the new construction work by a right-of-entry agreement signed by the Corps and the Port of New Orleans.

The agreement allows the lock project to proceed while details are worked out for the Corps to purchase the Galvez Street Wharf and 184 acres from the port.

The right-of-entry agreement was concluded after the final allocation of the lock project's cost among the Corps' general appropriations, \$305 million; the Inland Waterway Trust Fund, financed by a tax on barge-industry fuel, \$243 million; and the Port of New Orleans, \$29 million. Utility owners will pay another \$26 million for relocations.

Cost sharing for the lock project was set forth in the Water Resources Development Act of 1986. Most of the cost will be for inland waterway navigation (barges and towboats), known as the shallow-draft portion. This cost will be shared 50/50 between Corps general appropriations and the Inland Waterway Trust Fund. Additional cost for deep-draft navigation will be cost-shared 65/35 between Corps general appropriations and the Port of New Orleans. And some of the utility relocations will be the responsibility of the utility owners.

For the current fiscal year, Congress has appropriated \$16.3 million for the project.

Next on the construction-contract award schedule will be the levee and floodwall on the canal's west bank between St. Claude Avenue and the Mississippi River. This project will include a pedestrian promenade with benches and access from the Bywater community and the Naval Support Activity.

Another contract will be a levee test section to be built on vacant land adjacent to the existing lock, just north of St. Claude Avenue, near the dead-end of North Villere Street.

The test section will involve innovative soil-mixing procedures to strengthen the underlying soil and the construction of a short reach of earthen levee. The test will determine whether the soil-strengthening procedures can be used to eliminate or reduce the need for floodwalls along the canal, using more neighbor-friendly levees instead.

In addition, the Corps has begun a \$37 million community-impact mitigation program with a \$300,000 job-training contract awarded to Xavier University of Louisiana in August 2000. The first class of 15 students from neighborhoods adjoining the lock graduated on April 28. Additional mitigation projects will be undertaken as construction progresses.

**Lock information:** <http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/>. Click on 'search' and search for 'IHNC.'

**Map of Industrial Canal area and the two construction projects.**

<http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/pao/images/ihnc-clr.pdf>

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